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SIPDIS

STATE FOR S/CT AND WHA/CAR-MCISAAC

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [EFIN](#) [DR](#)

SUBJECT: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: COUNTERTERRORISM ACTION GROUP

REF: REF: STATE 14279

¶1. Summary: Embassy on February 6 hosted a coordination meeting of local embassies of nations involved in the Counterterrorism Action Group (CTAG). Poloff and NAS officer briefly sketched U.S. plans as CTAG chair for 2004 and ongoing U.S. law enforcement assistance programs relevant to counterterrorism. Other participants stressed a need to define the subject more precisely and avoid duplication of transnational efforts in other fora that deal with related priorities such as counternarcotics, money laundering, and border controls. Embassy invited written contributions, which were received from five embassies. Two of these have provided assistance to the GODR on counterterrorism. End summary.

¶2. Per guidance reftel, Embassy hosted a meeting of local G-8 and other invited embassies involved in the Counterterrorism Action Group (CTAG) on February 6. Participants included representatives at political counselor or similar level of Canada, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Spain, and the European Union (EU). The French representative did not attend, but later met with poloff and provided written input. Italy (with a very small mission) and the UN office declined the invitation.

General Considerations

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¶3. Poloff and NAS officer briefly sketched the range of U.S. assistance to the Dominican Republic relevant to the war on terrorism, including training of border control and airport personnel, other police training, assistance with justice reform, counternarcotics assistance, anticorruption measures, and assistance with implementation of money laundering legislation. Several other participants noted the broad range of these topics and suggested narrowing the definition to address a commonly accepted definition of "terrorism." Poloff subsequently circulated UNSC Resolution 1373 as an internationally accepted statement which highlights some elements such as money laundering.

¶4. The Netherlands representative expressed concern that CTAG might duplicate efforts in other multinational groupings such as the Dublin Group (or "Mini-Dublin Group" here) and the Schengen Agreement. He noted that the Mini-Dublin Group meets locally at ambassadorial level to exchange information about efforts against drug trafficking and money laundering, including police reform. The EU presidency also holds meetings of Schengen Agreement member embassies to exchange information on illegal migration and falsification of documents. The rep, seconded by the German rep, suggested that CTAG draw on the existing information exchanges under these programs.

Ongoing Programs

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¶5. France and Spain were the only participants to have provided assistance to the Dominican Republic specifically focused on counterterrorism (CT): a French expert from RAID (French acronym for an elite French police unit specialized in CT) conducted an "audit" of the rapid action group of the Dominican National Police, November 28 - December 5, 2003. The same Dominican police group had already had two training sessions by experts from the BRI (Brigade of Research and Intervention) of the City of Paris. Spain in March 2003 held an FATF/GAFI seminar for Latin American countries on combatting terrorist-related money laundering, which included Dominican participants.

¶6. Japan provides training to approximately 80 Dominicans per year in all areas of assistance, including drug enforcement, crime prevention, criminal investigation, and police management. There has been no CT-oriented training, but Japan offers courses in six CT-related areas which would be open to Dominicans if requested by the GODR (from a book of available cooperation programs which the GOJ distributes each year): migration control, airport security, customs cooperation, export controls, police and law enforcement cooperation, and the fight against terrorist-related money laundering. The Japanese Embassy here emphasized a need for governments receiving CT assistance to assign a priority and budget resources to CT efforts.

17. Germany and the UK both have regional counterdrug liaison programs based elsewhere in the Caribbean, which coordinate with the GODR, and Germany provided an in-country training course on this topic for 22 Dominican policemen in 2003. The Netherlands trains employees of Dutch Airline Martinair on passport and visa control and provided a week of in-country counternarcotics training to police in 2003 as part of a continuing program. France in 2003 provided in-country police training on "maintenance of order" and counternarcotics. Spain in January hosted a meeting of NGOs on assistance to victims of terrorism.

18. The EU has an ongoing project in the Dominican Republic for Modernisation and Reform of the State, budgeted at 36.4 million euros for the period March 2002 - February 2006). This includes support for reform of the justice system and support for reform of public administration. This program stresses good governance and anticorruption, but there is no EU program here specifically on CT. The EU rep noted the long lead time required -- the assistance follows a five-year plan -- and the need for a host government request for CT assistance.

Proposed Legislation

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19. We understand the GODR intends to introduce draft CT legislation into Congress for consideration during its next session, which begins February 27. Embassy will analyze the proposal and provide views and recommendations septel.

KUBISKE